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ABSTRACT

In this newsletter focusing on helping college students succeed, an introductory essay by David Shroyer examines experiences with developmental studies at the University of New Orleans and issues in serving underprepared students, especially problems of attitude on campus. Suggestions for success include: an informal support network, a team approach, weekend staff retreats, a file of approaches to reaching developmental students, careful forecasting, and evaluation and advocacy. Brief case studies are given of these programs: California State University at Los Angeles, the University of Louisville, Housatonic Community College in Connecticut, the University of North Florida; the University of North Carolina, Queens College in the City University of New York, and Donnelly College in Kansas. A list of ERIC references, an explanation of the Urban College and University Network, part of the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, and an introduction to the National Coordinating Council of Educational Opportunity Associations are included in the issue. (MSE)

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May 1980 Vol. 2, No. 1 Urban College and University Network.

connections

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Connections is the bulletin of the Urban College and University Network. Network participants are two- and four-year colleges and universities, both public and private, located in major U.S. urban centers. The Network provides a means for sharing information on successful or promising efforts by colleges and universities in the city to serve the educational needs of city residents, particularly poor, minority, and disadvantaged persons, and about the more persistent problems encountered by these colleges and universities as they provide education in the city.

The Urban College and University Network is a project of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, in cooperation with the American Council on Education, American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, Association of American Colleges, Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, Committee on Urban Program Universities, National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, and National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges. The project is made possible by a grant from the Ford Foundation.

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Urban colleges and universities are confronted with increasing numbers of students who need help with improving academic skills if they are to succeed in higher education. This issue of *Connections*, and the one that will follow, looks at efforts aimed at helping students to succeed.

David Shroyer, essayist for this issue, shares some insights derived from several years' experience in developmental programming at the University of New Orleans. His thoughtful comments touch upon several facets of serving underprepared students. He speaks about campus attitudes that hinder efforts to assist students and explores action that might be taken by committed administrators and faculty. He suggests that improving the quality of developmental programs may result in positive attitude changes.

Other articles in this issue focus on programs of Network campuses. Programs are variously titled. Some employ familiar terms such as "remedial," "developmental," or "retention" to identify their activities. Others are sensitive to being labeled, and to labeling students.

The articles describe program operation and some of the issues that appear to be significant in the view of faculty members, administrators, and students.

As the communications medium of the Urban College and University Network, *Connections* aims to begin the sharing process. Directors of the programs described are ready to talk with interested colleagues. Network staff is interested in knowing about other efforts and results in assisting students to succeed. ■

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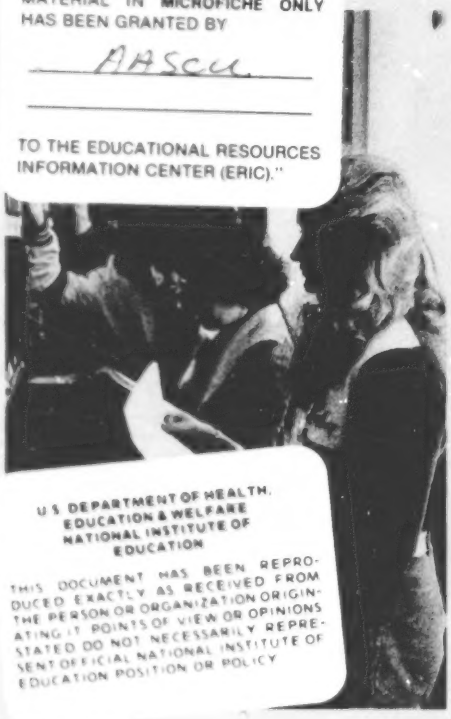

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PART I— ASSISTING STUDENTS TO SUCCEED IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Also in this issue:

- Teaching Survival
- Black Experience
- H.S.-College Co-Op
- Multiplying Writing Skills
- Questioning Is Key
- Goal: Skills and Esteem
- Peer Success 2

Our Chancellor at the University of New Orleans is fond of saying that for several years after the university began operating in 1958, using the low-slung converted barracks buildings of a former naval airfield on the Pontchartrain lakefront, he would, from time to time, have to rush out into the abandoned airstrips to frantically wave off some poor misguided naval pilot hellbent on landing on a university campus.

The Chancellor isn't one of them, but there are still university officials and faculty, as there are at urban and open admissions colleges around the country, who would like to stand at the entrances to the university during registration each semester and wave away large numbers of developmental students whom they feel arrive at the university mistakenly, strayed like those pilots years ago, from a course that would properly have taken them elsewhere.

Generally speaking, those who would stand in the entrances and wave off more than half of each freshman class are faculty or administrators who either came before the university became "urban," or before becoming aware of its urban status. Both their life goals and their training led them to hope they were joining an institution with the traditional sense of mission: to teach the classic disciplines to well-schooled students by traditional methods.

If the faculty I speak of had their way at UNO, over half of each freshman class would be waved away, refused admission. Almost all of these students come from the greater New Orleans area; they are the products of an under-funded, inferior public school system, have grown up in the poorest neighborhoods in the poorest large Southern city, and their scores on the ACT test place them in developmental sections of English and mathematics. A sizable majority of these students are black, another 5 percent are Hispanic, and there is a small but growing Asian minority group. About 25 percent of such students are white.

David L. Shroyer currently serves as director of the College Life Program (Special Services) for the University of New Orleans where he has made teaching developmental and low-income students his special concern since joining the English faculty in January 1972. In 1973 he received a Ford Foundation grant for research

"If the faculty I speak of had their way, over half of each freshman class would be waved away. . . ."

A few more quick statistics—quite similar to those for many publicly-supported urban colleges and universities—will help to sketch a profile of our student body as a whole:

- —91 percent of our students come from the New Orleans area
- —34 percent are 25 years of age or older
- —21 percent represent minorities
- —16 percent are black
- —48 percent of entering freshman in Fall 1979 placed in developmental English
- —70 percent placed in developmental mathematics
- —43 percent are part-time students
- —most of our students have jobs in addition to their studies.

The students who would be barred from entry are the students to whom I have devoted my professional life since 1972 when, as an instructor in English, I began working with other faculty and staff who were interested in developing better approaches to the problems encountered by developmental students. Eventually, we proposed and initiated the comprehensive developmental program which we named College Life, a program that is able to serve only 200 of the more than 800 new students each fall who are required to take both developmental English and math. Although there is no escaping the fact that the students we serve are woefully underprepared for university work, in New Orleans most were satisfactory or above-average students in the public high schools. Some performed at the tops of their respective peer groups, placing in the top 10 percent of their graduating classes. Most, while they almost always drastically underestimate the level of commitment and the amount of struggle necessary to reach their goals, are nonetheless serious about undertaking university work.

What follow are some personal reflections on my work in developmental education at the University of New Orleans. I believe that many, perhaps most, of the problems at other urban colleges and universities.

I have no packaged solutions to offer, only an indication of the responses we have made to problems, and ruminations on those responses which, although they lead to nothing so grand as a strategy, form my tentative orientation for doing developmental work in the future.

THE CHALLENGE

The greatest challenge of developmental education is to develop genuinely successful comprehensive approaches to student under-preparedness and the problems associated with under-preparedness so that students may gain the skills and behaviors necessary for pursuing university work.

Put that way, it sounds like it should be a fairly simple proposition, a matter merely of directing appropriate material and human resources into areas of identified need, then sitting back to watch the degrees come rolling along. Instead, it's the hardest, most challenging job I've had. Some of the problems I've observed are these.

MOAT AROUND THE CAMPUS

Our institutional commitment to developmental education has always rested, like New Orleans itself, on thin, shifting ground. The patterns of subsidence depend, of course, on a complex of volatile and contrary pressures, pressures from the larger world outside the university, from a social system which seems incapable of seriously addressing the grave crises of poverty, racism and illiteracy, and floods our institutions with students whose poor skills are the direct products of that system. Of course, the pressures also come from within the university itself.

Inside the university, those faculty and administrators who urge closed admissions policies suffer understandable and deep frustration about the chasm between their expectations for the university and the reality of its urban location and mission. In their frustration they see the world outside as the enemy and would like to build a moat around the campus, permitting entry only to a select group. They argue, and we must agree that developmental education is more properly the role of secondary education. The reality, however, is that hundreds of serious, intelligent students with academic potential graduate from local high schools each year with inadequate basic academic skills. For this reason, we have joined with the school system in efforts aimed at improving this situation. Indeed, we have initiated a project in which the victims of poor secondary schooling—our students—are themselves providing feedback to the schools on what needs improving.

Opponents of open admission also see the admission of developmental students as an assault on standards of academic achievement. They assert that to allocate funding for developmental courses and services at a level necessary to make them effective is to divert scarce resources from "worthier" students. They seem unaware of the enormous consequences that providing the inner city poor with the chance to obtain a high quality postsecondary education would have for the long-term health and development of our city.

Opponents use the strategy of isolate, divide, and conquer.

The would-be moat builders have not succeeded in barring entry to students who need developmental work, but they continue to present formidable obstacles to progress towards effective developmental education. In academic planning, budget curriculum, personnel policies and on other key committees, they seek to minimize the institution's commitment to providing instructional, counseling and support services to developmental students. Besides both frontal attacks and pincer movements against adequate funding for developmental education programs, there are also the problems of achieving clear program identity and academic legitimacy. Where possible, opponents of developmental education, using the strategy of isolate, divide, and conquer, strive for a piecemeal approach, scattering and dispersing services among a disparate lot of departments and divisions. Even in many situations where there is a developmental studies department or division, faculty, staff, and administrators remain outside the mainstream of academic life

on innovation in freshman composition. He is a past recipient of the AMOCO Foundation's Outstanding Teaching award, and in collaboration with several associates, including members of the College Life Program staff, developed an experiential developmental English text. He is the author of a survey article on the literature of the Interactive Education movement with Florence Carlson, in English Journal, and "Making Advantage of External Influences," an invited professional paper delivered before the Conference of Louisiana Colleges and Universities in 1977.

while the real decision-making process takes place somewhere else. Indeed personnel policies affecting the selection and continuity of staff for developmental programs usually militate strongly against the development of a stable professional multi-disciplinary team. Instead of a professional team, developmental programs are more often staffed by persons whose uncertain, tentative status in the university is roughly that of academic Kelly girls.

The response to any or all of these problems can begin with one person and some ideas. I offer the following as things we have found important in formulating our response.

AN INFORMAL SUPPORT NETWORK

It is essential to find the center of concern for developmental education, even if it is one person, and begin developing around that center a network of faculty, staff, and administrators from the chancellor and vice chancellor level down who are bour by that common concern. The unifying factor need not be either a particular ideology or temperament, but a genuine commitment to meeting the needs of developmental students. Our network grew up around forums and meetings related to developmental problems, and later blossomed at parties and picnics. We boasted humanists, scientists, revolutionaries, Republicans, liberals, conservatives, women, men, blacks, Hispanics, and whites. Such diversity creates tensions out of which a synthesis—something new—is possible. The main purpose of such a group, however, is to invite and develop support for developmental work and to create a sense of community among those doing it.

DEVELOPING THE TEAM APPROACH

An emphasis on creating a sense of community among faculty, staff, and students involved in developmental education is vital to the team approach. In fact, this probably cannot be over emphasized either in terms of staff development or developing the "new" discipline of developmental education which must include in it the fullest opportunity for allowing the maximum contribution from students, just as the staff community must fully use the human resources available within it. In practical terms, a feedback system which systematically gathers feedback on day-to-day operations, plus frequent round table staff meetings is critical to team-building. Successful multi-disciplinary coordination is impossible otherwise.

WEEKEND STAFF RETREATS

I suppose it sounds scout-like, but we have been going on staff development retreats in the country once or twice each year since 1974, and much of what our staff has been and is came directly out of those experiences. It is always possible to beg, borrow, or rent facilities at church camps, or YMCAs, or state parks, secure the very limited funding support necessary to cover the cost of food, rental, materials and possibly a training consultant, and hold marathon training sessions usually developed around several specific training objectives which various staff groups already have articulated.

Over a weekend, we manage to get in 18 to 20 hours of training, plus cooking and kitchen duty. We lace the training with light, non-threatening human relations exercises, but steer clear of anything that might seem like an encounter group. What has always emerged is a stronger staff community, with important new understandings and skills. No activity that I've been involved in has been more consistently productive than the staff retreats.

Nothing about developmental education is written in stone.

NEEDED: A FILE OF APPROACHES

Once there is a team with a sense of community and identity, we have found it important to work together on joint study and research projects and to take part in the activities of professional associations. Developmental education is a new, very broad, and very demanding discipline, and until quite recently almost none in it had been trained professionally for it. Nothing about it is written in stone, and in fact, comparatively little is written at all. The art of systematically developing an adequate repertoire of tested approaches to reaching developmental students is itself in an early stage. We have a responsibility to learn all we can from others as well as to share our successes with colleagues elsewhere.

FORECASTING IS VITAL

As part of our own self-education as well as our planning process, it is important that we make full use of forecasts concerning enrollment patterns, student profiles, etc. Where they do not exist in the form we need, we must do them ourselves. It is vital that we understand the implications of changing patterns and profiles, and it is crucial that we communicate this information to create maximum institutional awareness, not only of the problems involved in developmental education, but also the opportunities in terms of potential students, and potential community service.

EVALUATION AND ADVOCACY

Evaluations based on careful statistical work, governed by the strictest objectivity, must prove that developmental programs work, or developmental education will be in grave jeopardy in a period of fiscal austerity. Moreover, it is not unreasonable to expect programs to produce such proofs and we have found that rigorous evaluations provide important management information on which we can judge and modify past decisions, and base new ones.

The capacity of individual staff to offer responsible, well-informed and effective advocacy for developmental education needs is enormously strengthened once a support network has been identified and once, through common experience and training, a multi-disciplinary staff team has begun to emerge. Their effectiveness is enhanced through their initiation and production of research in the area of developmental studies. We are in the position to credibly argue the value of developmental education as both a provider of students and as a support for academic standards. The ground on which the university's commitment to developmental education rests will be much firmer. The platform on which the moat advocates stand will sink perceptibly.

". . . disadvantaged students have bought educational sows' ears hoping they were silk purses all their lives."

RACISM OR ACADEMIC ELITISM?

It isn't always easy to distinguish between racism and academic elitism. Frequently, the implications for developmental work are the same—hostility to open admissions and to developmental studies and the exclusion of black, minority, and poor students from equality of higher educational opportunity.

However, a distinction must be made between racism and elitism and the irrational hostility underlying attitudes on the one hand, and a necessary regard for supporting appropriate standards of academic achievement on the other. A thoughtful insistence on assuring that standards be kept is in the interest of everyone. Black, minority, and other disadvantaged students have brought educational sows' ears hoping they were silk purses all their lives. Inferior degrees and certificates represent the subversion of the purposes of developmental education. We must successfully communicate to both the university and the larger communities that the real function of developmental education is to enable students to attain high levels of achievement. Once we have thus established the real purpose of developmental education, we must be about the much more difficult task of accomplishing that purpose. When we can truly do that, and prove it, by rigorous evaluation open to scrutiny by anyone, I believe most of those who would wave our students away from either my institution or yours will turn back to more decorous and productive academic pursuits. ■

Los Angeles
ENGLISH COMPOSITION FOR A MULTICULTURAL STUDENT POPULATION

English 110 at California State University, Los Angeles, is a first level composition course for foreign students and native speakers who are identified by their problems with sentence structure. At CSU-LA where about 62 percent of the undergraduates are non-Anglos, many of the native speakers are bilingual but are not literate in either language. Saralyn Daly, professor of English and linguistics, developed English 110 based on pragmatic observation. A few of her observations are:

"The average composition course has too many language targets: some outmoded, some redundant, some ill-defined. Appropriate definition is obtained through constrastive analysis of English with the student's first language.

"Students are more competent orally than in written work but by learning to listen more acutely, they can transfer some oral competencies to written achievement."

Sharon Bassett, co-director of the program, says, "We try to teach from the rhetorical, composing structure of the essay, working into specifics. We find that mechanical problems diminish when students become committed to the substance of what they are writing. We stress specificity, the avoidance of abstraction."

This year there are 720 students in the 12 sections of English 110 being taught each quarter. A typical day in class might go like this: 60 students, 3 teachers and 7 tutors are in a large, comfortable room. The teachers present the writing problem of the day. The pre-writing might consist of small group work in which students explore the topic together, as teachers and tutors move from group to group offering help or suggestions. The room hums with 20 or 30 private, intense conversation. As the collaborative pre-writing is finished, the students move to tables where they write for an hour or so in blue books.

Daly started English 110 four years ago when she saw the need for a special approach to teach writing to the university's increasing multicultural student population. It was funded by a two-year grant from the California State University and College System.

The first two years of the program were hard times for Daly and Bassett. "We had good support from the Chancellor's office and one or two deans tried to be helpful," Bassett recalls, "but we were continually being evaluated. I guess they planned to evaluate us until they got a bad one.

"We thought we would lose," she continued. "Then the English Placement Test came in, which showed the university that 80 percent of incoming students fall below the 'normal range' of freshman English, so they had to keep us. It was hell on earth at first, but as we became better known and received the support of the evaluators, things improved."

But not everything improved. The program started out in a large, carpeted, flexible room that was useable for many small groups. There was easy access to the computer center and the tutoring center. The space assignment was only temporary, however, and now English 110 is in more conventional classrooms, not as well-suited to the program's teaching style.

And then there is the English Department, with whom relations are admittedly strained. As it is with many universities, the number of English majors at CSU is rapidly diminishing. More and more tenured faculty are teaching lower division courses and there is the prospect of traditional faculty being thrust onto English 110. Right now the part-time faculty is carefully selected.

"We choose people who are sensitive to the cultural setting of the students," Bassett says, "people with ESL backgrounds, who are not *ESL*-y. There are people with a wide range of backgrounds."

Meanwhile, there is more change blowing in the wind at CSU. A visiting professor was on campus Fall quarter, organizing the 120 English course and the basic 190 freshman English course. They are the courses a student goes into after 110 and they may be recast to contain many of the English 110 principles.

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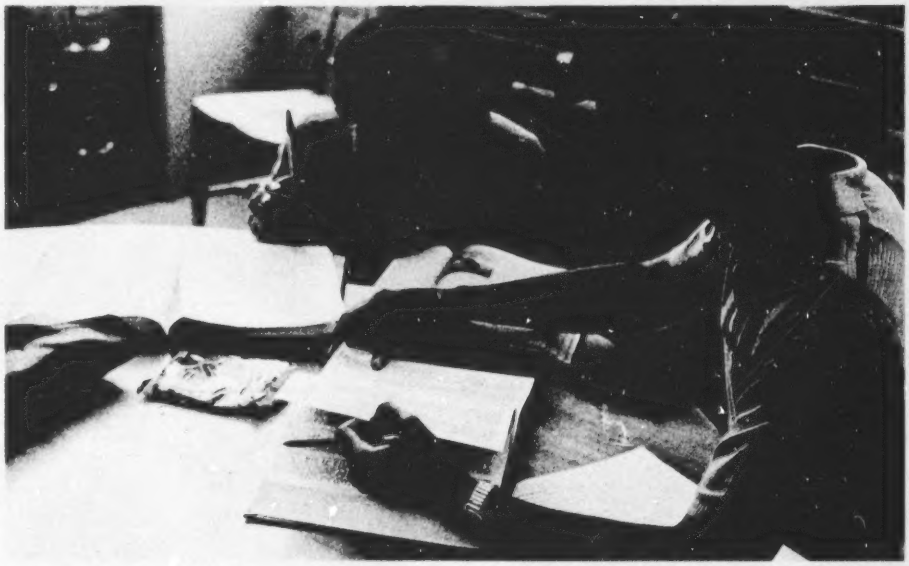
Louisville
COMPETENCY-BASED SKILLS TRAINING LOWERS ATTRITION



The University of Louisville, which draws 90 percent of its students from the metropolitan area, is no latecomer to the ranks of urban institutions. It traces its urban roots back to 1910, when it received its first budget allocation from the city of Louisville. However, U of L did not serve low-income students until 1970, when it was changed from a private to a state institution and began gradually to lower its tuition to comparability with other state-funded colleges and universities. An open admissions policy was established in the mid-1970s.

In a 1978 report to the U of L Board of Trustees, vice president Herbert Garfinkel remined them of the university's early urban commitment and went on to set the record straight on the nature of the university's urban mission. He could have been speaking for many of his colleagues around the country when he said, "It is a misconception that a commitment to an urban university mission means lower educational standards and a drastically reduced scope of university-level programs."

The vice president noted that the university student body was disproportionately non-traditional, including "many persons from the central city minority, social and ethnic groups. And indeed, " he said, "these students are among those we most want to serve."

He quickly added, "However, the setting for urban universities rapidly is being altered by suburban growth, which has been no less pronounced than the earlier shifts of population from farm to city. Therefore, our programs should relate to the whole metropolitan community."

With its change to a state institution, U of L ran up against a problem that other urban state universities will recognize: the contention that the university suffers from priorities and preferences that commonly occur in states where rural interests dominate the legislature. In those states, the most favored institutions are frequently the long-established land-grant universities and colleges with their close ties to the pretigious professional schools and to the countryside communities.

The condition is made worse by a lack of understanding on the part of policy-makers—at the federal level as well as the state—of the uniqueness of urban institutions and the growth of their educational responsibilities. As a consequence, urban institutions often have found themselves traveling on second class tickets, with funding and other support that does not fully acknowledge their differences and their contributions to the communities they serve.

Still another problem at U of L will have a familiar ring to urban university administrators. A univeristy planning officer stated that a major U of L concern is the "difficulty of obtaining professionally qualified academicians who are genuinely committed to the urban mission." The tendency among many top caliber faculty, he said, is to gravitate toward institutions where they can work in the traditional mode, undisturbed by the dynamics of the urban role.

The residue of these and other problems tends to trickle down to U of L's Developmental Education Center (DEC), which is close to the heart of the university's efforts to turn underprepared students into degree holders. At U of L about 10 percent of the students are classified as educationally disadvantaged.

The university has an array of programs to recruit, admit, and retain these students. An Upward Bound program is offered to inner-city high school youths who take classes, are given entrance examinations, and are familiarized with university life. Another program focuses on disadvantaged students' special needs for financial assistance. The Office of Minority Affairs provides support services, including counseling and tutoring, and was used by more than 600 students in the 1977-78 academic year.

The DEC, now in its third year, is located in University College, which is headed by the university's only black dean. It must compete for funds with some of the developmental programs in order to fulfill its purpose of offering open admission students competency-based courses in the social sciences, humanities, and natural sciences that will give them basic skills training needed to succeed in college academic programs.

DEC offers five general education courses for full credit at the 100 level and seven laboratory courses for which instructional credit, but not degree credit is given. The laboratory courses are prerequisite to the general education program and include vocational development, standard English usage, spelling, listening, and critical thinking.

Mark E. Blum, co-director of DEC along with Stephen Spangehl, explained that, "A competency-based program was chosen in order to specify the skills needed to succeed in the academic program."

In a paper on the rationale for competency-based curricula co-authored by

Blum and Spangehl, they stated that transforming traditional courses into explicitly competency-based courses is a two-stage process. The first is "a rational analysis of what is taught in the major divisions of knowledge at the general education and advanced undergraduate levels, and articulating this content into a schema of competency objectives and measures which can guide course design. The second stage is to teach such a course, and to see how the rationally posited competencies fare in the reality of practice."

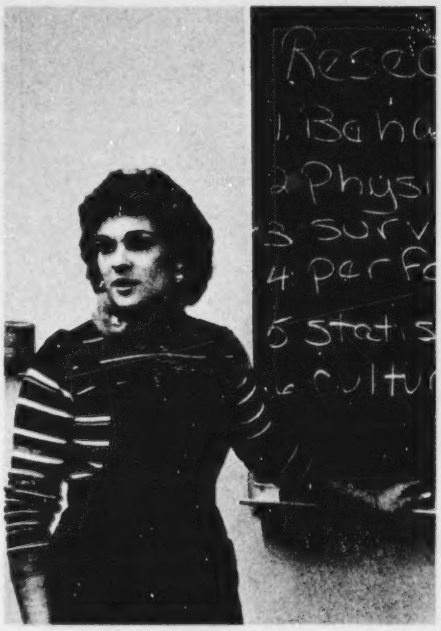
In their course on Introduction to Social Science Inquiry, students use 37 work sheets which lead them into doing inquiry. "We have found consistently, " says Blum, "that students without the cultural background or the references sufficient to understand lectures can still answer their own questions. So we help them to ask a good question, define the key terms, develop a research plan, and sort through the available ways of gathering evidence."

The program is run on a shoestring with two full-time faculty, three part-time faculty, and four work-study and graduate students. The annual budget is $15,000 for salaries and $2,500 for expenses. Westinghouse Learning Corporation materials are used for half the courses, and the other half are faculty developed. Enrollment in the DEC this year is 525 students. Future plans include the addition of 200 level courses and the expansion of offerings to include skills training in studying, preresearch, and oral communication.

Money, of course, is a recurring headache. But Blum and Spangehl are wary of going after grant funds that would serve only as a short-term fiscal transfusion. Instead, they would like to see the program institutionalized. They have their eyes on the tuition monies generated by the program and would like to see some of it turned back to help build up the instructional pool.

Blum says that support for the program from Vice President Garfinkel has been "tremendous," but more is needed from other academic managers. He said that without the university's four-year bachelor of liberal studies program, DEC couldn't offer what it does. But there are difficulties interfacing with the traditional academic departments.

"Right now," he says, "the math department faculty which teaches remedial as well



as advanced courses has been extremely cooperative, and we are working toward cooperation with other traditional departments. But for some of the others—it's like a foreign country."

Given its position as a relative newcomer dealing with an educational problem that is relatively new to the university, how is DEC shaping up?

In addition to national-normed tests and evaluation of student mastery of competency-based programs, DEC is in the midst of a longitudinal evaluation designed to track its students over four years. Data is now coming in on students who started in Fall 1978. For the study, two groups of 105 students each were matched by ACT scores. One group took developmental courses, the other did not. After two semesters, 64 of the students who were in the group that had taken developmental courses were still enrolled. Of the control group, only 36 were still enrolled. The score: 61 percent retention for the treatment group and 34 percent for the control group.

"I was astounded," says Blum.

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Bridgeport
TEACHING HOW TO SURVIVE IN COLLEGE

The name of the project at Housatonic Community College in Bridgeport, Connecticut, gets right to the point: Student Retention Project. It is the consequence, says one administrator with a touch of humor, of "our quick and dirty approach to admissions."

With 40 percent of its students considered educationally disadvantaged, the administration sought a program that would focus on retention by providing greater faculty and staff attention to student problems.

A carefully managed telephone campaign, using trained peer counselors to follow up on students whose teachers indicated they weren't succeeding or weren't showing up for class, turned up some interesting information. Most of the students were troubled by the registration process, particularly a confusing add-drop period.

The telephoning got good results and is being continued on a reduced basis, but it was decided that the target—only those students with easily identifiable problems—was too small. So some exploratory projects were started. The largest is a one-semester course presenting an overview of what the students could expect from college.

Arthur Hillis, director of the project, explained that, "A lot of the reasons why people drop out have to do with disillusionment. Some don't know what they want to do; others see no rhyme or reason to their program. Some don't even know the difference between a program and a course."

The course is based on student development principles, involving the "how-tos" that students need in order to survive in college. The class meets at 8 a.m. and attendance has held at 95 percent.

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Jacksonville

PEERS HELP IMPROVE RETENTION

Several years ago if you were poor and black and living in Jacksonville, Florida, the upper-level University of North Florida was not an inviting place to continue your education.

The campus is lovely, but it is 20 miles from where most blacks live, and there was no public transit. And the word was out that, even though there were some blacks on the staff, the brothers and sisters were not always welcome as students. It was a lonely place if you were black.

Using a $30,000 allocation from the state university system earmarked for minority student retention, UNF created a program aimed at overcoming the student's problems of isolation and academic deficiencies and at dealing with faculty attitudes.

Called "Student-to-Student," the program is housed in the Academic Enrichment and Skills Center which provides tutorial and other student services and programs. Key to the program is a small group of successful black students who are hired as peer counselors for incoming black students. Working from computer lists, they contact more than 100 new students each quarter. They orient the newcomers to the campus and brief them on services. They unobtrusively keep track of them, watching for early warning signs that may lead to dropping out.

Program funds have been used to hire a minority counselor. The new counselor has been added to the regular counseling staff rather than to the Skills Center staff where she might be perceived to be for minorities only. And finally, bus service has been instituted connecting the campus with downtown Jacksonville.

Summing it up, Sandra Hansford, director of the Skills Center, says, "What we are trying to do are special things without looking like we're doing special things."

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Charlotte

USING THE BLACK EXPERIENCE TO MAKE EDUCATION RELEVANT

Bertha Maxwell, director of the Afro-American and African Studies Program (AAA) at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte, isn't interested in talking about retention numbers. "First of all," she says, "I don't separate recruitment and retention. I think it is morally wrong to bring students in without giving thought to how you are going to keep them from going through the revolving door."

She also has strong feelings about remedial courses, and she puts them this way: "Once you start to label people then you put them into boxes. I don't think the university has any business taking people in who can't succeed, and if they do take in people who can succeed then I think they have an obligation to take whatever students come in with and work with it. They might have remedial courses for white kids, but none of my kids go to them. I don't buy into that remedial game."

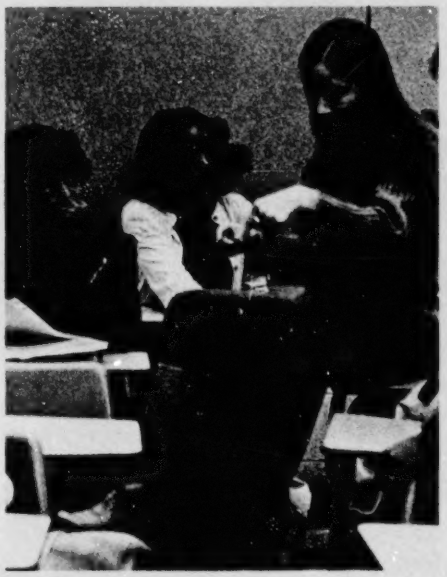
The beginnings of AAA date back to 1969 when a bitter confrontation occurred at UNCC between blacks and whites in student government over the creation of a Black Student Union. The university administration was drawn into the controversy and the upshot was the formation of a black studies committee composed of 15 white faculty and 5 black students.

AAA went into operation in the fall of 1971. The curriculum is defined as all activities that the staff and students engage in, whether academic, political or social, which enhance the black perspective and promote behavioral change.

There are seven full and part-time faculty, and 25 students (20 of them volunteers) working in the program which this year is serving 566 students.

The program is divided into four phases with courses applicable to each year in the undergraduate curriculum. The phases are titled "Who Am I?", "Why Am I Here?", "Where Did I Come From?", and "Where Do I Go From Here?"

According to program literature, "The curriculum is structured to aid not only in



the academic development of the student, but also in the development of his entire being."

AAA freshmen start out with the general university orientation, but they also get an AAA orientation and early on there is a workshop to teach people how to use positive energies.

Peer counselors, selected by Maxwell, are assigned to five or six students for the academic year, keeping track of them and assisting them when needed. To recruit the counselors, a self-concept test is given to all entering freshmen, and the top scoring 10 to 18 are trained.

In recruiting new students, a program called WHY (We Hear You) is taken to junior and senior high schools and even to elementary schools. "We want to build up a pool," says Maxwell. "We want these kids to know us well so that they'll be comfortable coming here when they are ready to."

The students in Maxwell's program get what she calls a heavy dose of blackness. The black perspective and the black experience (the first course is called The Black Experience) is everywhere, reinforcing all aspects of the program.

AAA students are required to get out regularly into the community to work on projects with school children, senior citizens, or in black-owned businesses. Maxwell pushes community experience as opposed to sitting in a class and discussing the nature of ghetto life.

English and math courses are taught by regular faculty and are regular courses, but "with a difference," that Maxwell calls transdisciplinary instruction. "In English composition the kids have to learn to write, and we don't care what. The materials are all oriented to a black perspective."

"The faculty who teach English and math attend a faculty retreat that includes staff and students. The students give the teachers feedback from the year before. What we are trying to do is build a support system. Even in the math class we try to get a black instructor."

Maxwell defends the curriculum and teaching methods saying, "These are not watered down courses." But some administrators have raised their eyebrows over what they consider abnormally high grades in AAA courses. Students deny there is any grade inflation, saying the high grades come because they work harder in AAA courses than they do in others.

Nevertheless, high grades in AAA courses are cited as one reason why some of the faculty hesitate to allow the program to expand. Two years ago the central administration turned down a request to give AAA departmental status. A similar request from the Criminal Justice program was also denied at that time, but it has since become a department. Now AAA has revived its request. One possible obstacle is the concern among some in the central administration that AAA is providing a place for blacks to become insulated, which was not its original purpose.

The new UNCC chancellor, E. K. Fretwell Jr., has indicated strong support for the potential of AAA, but Maxwell has no illusions about university-wide attitudes. "I think it would be extremely paternalistic to give us resources just because we're black," she said. "On the other hand, I would be extremely naive and a fool to believe that on a predominately white campus I would be 100 percent supported." Race might be a funding factor, of course, but funding processes at state institutions can be labyrinthine and not necessarily equitable.

At UNCC the money comes down from the central administration based on FTE, but after it arrives, the local administration has the authority to allocate it as it sees fit. The practice is not unusual. Established programs, considered important to campus prestige or mission often are funded in excess of their faculty-student ratio. Expansion on the home campus aside, Maxwell has hopes of exporting the AAA program. She would like to exchange graduate students with other campuses, supervise them herself, and send them on to give the AAA concept wider exposure and application. She is also involved in the National Council for Black Studies which she helped to found in 1975 to develop standards for accreditation of black studies programs. A self-study of AAA has been conducted to assist the council in its work. Maxwell readily conveys her pride in the program and her confidence that it is being done right and that it is successful. Even though she is not yet ready to publish retention figures—"because we don't have enough warm bodies to pull them together"—she is more than willing to share information.

"We would prefer for people to come on site because it sounds too good to be true. It took us eight years to perfect the program. People have to see it to believe that this woman is not just flapping her lip."

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New York
STARTING RETENTION IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS

At Queens College, City University of New York, coping with the problems of underprepared students is central to college operations. An estimated 10 percent of the student body requires some type of developmental education assistance. The college staff has long been interested in providing support services, and a series of developmental initiatives are firmly in place.

Students who are weak in basic skills may take courses taught by members of the academic departments and by specially trained faculty. There are three learning laboratories which offer free tutoring for any student who needs it. For those who request help in disciplines other than reading, writing, and mathematics, there is a college-wide tutoring service. To round out this support system an assistance program is being created for students who speak English as a second language.

But more is needed. Several years ago, when the number of entering students who needed basic skills training began to show a marked increase, the college took steps to reach down into feeder high schools to see if skills deficiencies could be corrected and students prepared for postsecondary academic work before they began attending the college. With a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education covering 75 percent of the $134,000 annual budget and institutional funds to supply the balance, the Queens English Project (QEP) was launched in 1978.

The QEP is a collaborative program between the college and five feeder high schools. Members of the college's English Department, Secondary Education Department, and the director of the Academic Resource Center have worked with teachers and department chairpersons from the high schools to create a three-year bridge program in reading and writing. The program is for 11th and 12th graders and carries over into the freshman year at Queens College.

The teaching method developed for the project centers around inquiry. Betsy Kaufman, co-director of the project, informally describes it this way: "There is generally a lot of talking that goes on in classrooms. We try to stress substituting some of that talking with writing and observation. So instead of discussing a film, students are asked to write their reactions to it. Or one student might be chosen to read a paper to the class and the rest of the students then will write a reaction to that student's paper.

Faculty members from the college and the high schools attended weekly seminars to learn the new method and the newly developed principles of teaching composition. Thirty-two faculty members are involved in the project part-time.

There are 500 students in QEP this year, including the entire senior class of one of the high schools. The first class of QEP students are now in their freshman year at Queens so the retention value of the project cannot be measured yet. However, evaluation data gained through questionnaires, essay tests, objective reading tests and site visits gives Kaufman reason for optimism. She reports that, "Attitudes about the project are excellent and some of the high school teachers want the program to continue for another five years." She says that two or three of the high schools will probably pick up the program after outside funding ceases in 1980. Within the college, the program is highly regarded and is considered a showcase of institutional efforts to serve the educationally disadvantaged.

All that is needed now, " says Kaufman, "is time. Time to let it work."

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Kansas City
HEAVY SCHEDULE OF HARD WORK HELPS STUDENTS CATCH UP

Donnelly College is a private two-year Catholic college located in a low-income section of Kansas City, Kansas. Occupying what the staff refers to with some affection as a hand-me-down campus, Donnelly is doing what it has always done. Its emphasis is on creating opportunities for those students who have few options in the post-secondary education marketplace.

Donnelly began as a low-cost institution offering white, Catholic young people what might be their only opportunity to attend college.

The city and the neighborhood changed in the 1960s. Donnelly's white student population gave way to low-income black and ethnic students. Today, less than 20 percent of the students come to the college directly from high school. The shift away from a white constituency caused many faculty to move on, but the mission was kept intact. The college adapted to its new clientele, 85 percent of whom arrive unprepared to make a smooth entry into college without some form of special assistance.

The students are beneficiaries of a heritage and focus that have fostered positive staff attitudes. Teachers and administrators are committed to the college's open door mission and to their responsibility to help students achieve. There is a sense of caring combined with toughness. The caring comes through in the staff expectations that students try, work hard, and succeed.

"We are concerned about where students are when they leave rather than what they come with," is a commonly expressed sentiment. Talking about the faculty, academic vice president Virginia Minton says, "They have developed skills and expertise. . . .and a belief that everybody can learn. The students sense that."

But even in an institution that brims with unity and purpose, developmental education can be a source of sensitivity and struggle. For example, in 1978 a developmental education program was started to improve

Donnelly's already respectable retention rate of 78.3 percent. It is funded mainly by a Special Services grant from HEW. The program director, Sister Corine Joyce decided to call the program simply Special Services—until instructors and administrators objected. They thought it would somehow set the students in the program apart from others. When she changed the name to Goal Center it made everybody very happy.

The Goal Center provides intensive study for incoming students who are placed in remedial math and English courses and who sign up for reading and study skills courses. The program includes a psychology course on individual differences that gives students an opportunity to apply what they have learned to their own behavior in a supportive small-group environment.

The Goal Center courses are taught by regular faculty who are likely to be teaching the same students in advanced courses later on. It is a good experience for both. Further academic support is available to students from 10 salaried peer tutors.

Although all went well enough the first year of the program, Sister Corine was not satisfied. The program met Monday, Wednesday, Friday. Tardiness and absenteeism were high and self-esteem was low. Sister Corine heard a lot of, "I've always been dumb," from students.

So she tried a new tactic. She wanted a core program that would bring students into the classroom five days a week. It didn't come easily. Once again there was concern about singling out students because not all special services students would be in the core program.

"I had to talk to the administration from November to May to get permission to do this core program," Sister Corine said, "and they resisted because they were afraid that we would be putting the students down or hampering them in some way."

Permission was granted and the core program was started in Fall 1979 along with the psychology course. The core students are taking 12 hours of English, reading, study skills, math and psychology. And Sister Corine is making her point.

"Last year," she says "I taught remedial English and I had 16 students. Eight were withdrawn for absenteeism and 5 came back this fall.

"I started out the core group this year with 14 students and I still have 14." With a note of triumph, she adds, "And we are not hearing complaints, either."

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11

eric as a resource

The following reports and journal articles are drawn from the data base of the Educational Resource Information Clearinghouse on Higher Education, and have been announced in either of ERIC's two monthly publications, *Resources in Education* (RIE) or *Current Index to Journals in Education* (CIJE). RIE and CIJE are available for reference in college, public, and government libraries around the world. Most of the non-journal literature (those with "ED" numbers) is available in microfiche in over 600 library ERIC collections. Copies of many reports and journal articles can be obtained as well.

Chausow, Hyman M. *Remedial Education: A Position Paper.* 1979. 16p. (ED 170 013)* MF-$0.83; PC-$1.82.

Remediation does not have to come in the form of segregated remedial courses. Results of several studies indicate that: student achievement in remedial courses has not resulted in improved performance in regular college courses; retention is very low; enrollment has a highly adverse effect upon the student's self-concept. City Colleges of Chicago studies on "low ability students" employing more recent approaches to corrective learning indicate that: (1) in classes using the mastery learning concept, student achievement and retention are superior to those attained in remedial program efforts and are generally higher than achievement and retention of students in regular programs and courses; (2) well-planned supportive materials and services can compensate for poor college preparation; and (3) cooperative staff and faculty efforts to improve the learning process can result in more successful college learning experience for more college students.

making connections

Donovan, Richard A.; And Others. *The Final Report of National Project II: Alternatives to the Revolving Door.* 1977. 61p. (ED 151 054)* MF-$0.83; PC-$4.82.

The results of a FIPSE-sponsored national project to examine programs designed to aid college and university students not adequately prepared for postsecondary education are examined. The associate institutions were selected to form a consortium on the basis of evidence of success from relatively small, special programs for underprepared students. Abstracts of final reports from eight institutions and the Thirteen College Curriculum Program of the Institute for Services to Education are presented. The report contains concluding essays on research and program evaluation precepts and practices, affective considerations, program evaluation in terms of cognitive achievement, policy issues, research agendas, and programmatic concerns. The report also discusses the implications of project findings.

Herd, Ruby H. *Developmental Studies; Whose Responsibility?* 1978. 12p. (ED 156 223)* MF-$0.83; PC-$1.82.

A national study on Adult Functional Competency, conducted by the University of Texas, determined that less than one-half of the adult population (46 percent) was proficient in handling the demands of modern living. Education enriches some lives, but guarantees intellectual impoverishment to others, the study concluded. A program at El Centro College to provide an approach to the problem of compensating for poor educational experiences, especially for nontraditional students, is outlined. The program involves a separate division with integrated subject courses and the participation of counselor/instructors and students in planning educational experiences consistent with students' abilities and goals.

Oliver, Marion L. *The Role of Academic Advising in Compensatory Education Programs.* 1978. 7p. (ED 171 819)* MF-$0.83; PC-$1.82.

The task of graduating educationally disadvantaged students from an institution of higher learning is difficult, compounded because the special needs of these students are largely ignored by institutions. As a result, a disproportionate number of these students experience early failures. With the help of academic advising and other self-help programs, especially during the freshman year, many of the problems that students face can be avoided. Academic advising provides educationally disadvantaged students with the opportunity of obtaining equal education by providing both academic and emotional support.

Sanchez, Bonnie, Comp. *About Community College Remedial and Developmental Education: A Brief Highlighting Important Literature Since 1968 on Remedial and Developmental Education in the Community College.* 1977. 26p. (ED 142 264)* MF-$0.83; PC-$3.32.

The implementation of remedial education in the community college has become more urgent. This annotated bibliography reports on the experimentation in programs, methods of instruction, and indications of program effectiveness. The bibliography compiles 49 references to published and unpublished materials, and consists of eight sections: General Sources; Remedial Education; Developmental Education; Basic Skills, English, Reading and Composition; Communication and Oral Skills; Mathematics; and Science.

*Copies available from ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS), P.O. Box 190, Arlington, VA 22210

**Reprints available from University Microfilms International (UMI) Article Copy Dept., 300 N. Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106 ($4.00 each) ■

NETWORKS

Networks is a product of a 1975 grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) in which 10 of 225 institutional applicants were selected to be designated as Associates in National Project II: Alternatives to the Revolving Door. The two and four-year colleges agreed to undertake specific research projects connected with their programs for underprepared students and to function as a consortium. Bronx Community College was chosen as Resource Institution for the consortium.

In December 1976, the Associates agreed to discuss their programs and share their research findings at a national conference. The conference generated such interest and the conference environment seemed so conducive to constructive problem solving, that Bronx applied to FIPSE for additional support to use the conference format as a way to stimulate institutional change. The Fund responded with a two-year grant that enables Network to design and manage highly focused conferences and to publish issue-oriented newsletters and monographs. In addition to the involvement of the original NP II Associates, Networks draws from a consultant pool that includes dozens of other faculty from colleges across the country.

Each year Networks hosts a national conference, "Questions and Answers," and conducts follow-up conferences. Networks designs regional workshops which include instructional design, tutoring, college orientation, and English composition programming. The Instructional Design Workshop analyzes problems inherent in making instructional and curricular changes and actively engages the conferees in designing a specific project for use at their own institutions. The workshop is not field specific and therefore can be applied to any discipline.

The Tutoring Workshop sessions discuss how to secure public and private sector

Network Advisory Panel: Milton Bins, Senior Associate for Policy and Program Development with the Council of the Great City Schools; Samuel Courtsson, Staff Vice President of the RCA Corporation; Harvey Gara, Director of Urban Development and Process Research with The Urban Institute; Michael Goldstein, Attorney, Arnold Grobman, Chancellor of the University of Missouri at St. Louis; Carl Holman, President of The National Urban Coalition; Sister Dorothy Ann Kelly, President of the College of New Rochelle; Regina Kyle, Vice President of the Association of American Colleges; Lucille Maurer, Delegate to the Maryland State Legislature; Ernest Morial, Mayor of the City of New Orleans; Daniel Perlman, Dean of Administrative Services for Roosevelt University in Chicago; Herbert Sessman, Chancellor of the San Francisco Community College District; Jose Vazquez, Professor of Education at Hunter College in New York City; and Ronald Williams, President of Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago.

support monies, how to build support systems within an institution, how to select an appropriate tutoring model, how to determine a viable method of tutor training, and how to mesh evaluation plans with measurable program goals.

The College Orientation workshop examines alternate ways to facilitate student adjustment and promote student responsibility. It is a combination of two highly successful sessions conducted by St. Edward's University and Southeastern Community College at the 1977 national conference.

The English workshop engages conferees in the selection of appropriate placement tests, helps them analyze course content, utilize support systems fully, establish and validate realistic exit criteria, and create linkages between basic writing and other courses.

Networks adapts its conferences and workshops according to local needs. "Such requests interest us," director Dr. Richard A. Donovan says, "because they allow us to share responsibilities, follow-up and expenses with co-sponsoring groups. We are continually seeking new forms of collaboration with colleges, universities, state systems and other groups that have specific problems with programs for underprepared students to which Networks might respond."

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NCCEOA

The National Coordinating Council of Educational Opportunity Associations (NCCEOA) was founded in December 1977 to "further the development of existing TRIO-based Associations, to exchange information among the Associations, and to provide a forum for discussion regarding the possibility of creating a national body," according to Arnold Mitchem, chairman.

NCCEOA created seven task forces to examine issues or concerns of the member Associations: CETA; Department of Education and the Reorganization of the Office of Education; Future of the NCCEOA; National Journal; Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965; Research and Evaluation; and Training.

NCCEOA lists five major goals or accomplishments. First, the Council directed its efforts both toward increasing the funding level for the TRIO programs and toward clarifying and strengthening the Special Programs authorizing legislation. With strong support from Congressman William Ford, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education and Congressman Louis Stokes, a member of the Labor-HEW Appropriations Subcommittee, the appropriations for TRIO increased from $115 million in FY 1978 to $140 million in FY 1979, and to $147.5 million in FY 1980. The Council also recommended amending the TRIO Subsection of the Higher Education Act of 1965, and that measure was adopted, with very minimum modification, in the House passed version of the Higher Education Reauthorization Act in November 1979.

A second major accomplishment and concern of the Council is the legitimization of the theory and practice of compensatory education in higher education. "Certainly the on-going process directed at achieving legitimacy for our profession is being conducted on more fronts than our policy initiatives, and in that sense, its success is more difficult to measure," Mitchem said. "Nevertheless, increased funding and an atmosphere of continued funding lend permanence to our programs and promote legitimacy," he continued.

Closely related to the issue of legitimacy for educational opportunity program professionals is the issue of professionalism. "It will be clear that we have established ourselves as a profession when we can adequately protect our own interest and the interest of disadvantaged students enrolled in or aspiring to enroll in college and when we ourselves can and do establish standards of training and conduct for educational opportunity staffs," Mitchem said.

A fourth point Mitchem raises is the promotion of participation by minority educators in the policy process. "In this area, too, much has been accomplished in the Council's existence," he said. Five of the Council's constituent members now actively participate in the Committee for Full Funding of Education Programs. Council members have testified on six occasions before Subcommittees of the Congress on matters pertaining to the TRIO authorization or appropriations. Further, Washington policymakers are now regularly involved in the conferences and other professsional development activities of the TRIO-based Associations and officers of the Council and of the Associations regularly interact with such policymakers.

Finally, the stimulation of the more effective stewardship on the part of the Office of Education toward the TRIO programs is sought by the Council. "Despite the fact that the Special Programs for Students from Disadvantaged Backgrounds is the largest single program within the Bureau of Higher and Continuing Education, the funding and monitoring of TRIO programs as well as the sponsorship of new initiatives within them has oftentimes not been given responsible and professional attention by the Bureau," Mitchem said. "Moreover the judgments and recommendations of TRIO professionals are usually not sought and when offered are seldom given serious consideration by the bureaucracy," he said.

"The need for the National Coordinating Council of Educational Opportunity Associations has never been more apparent," Mitchem strongly stated.

For more information on the Council and its activities contact:

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